



# ***Communication***

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# ***So Many Concepts, So Little Time***

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**Let W, W, W, W, W, H  
rule**



# **Who Should, Shouldn't**

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**DRMS situation: Approx. 300 employees, 70 different locations/military installations; 1000s of on/off site units wanting to deliver or pick up property; all military services; Pentagon to field one striper; offerors choose where to perform receive/store/issue; 15-site and open/covered storage minimums rules; savings/cost avoidance definition expanded; optimize labor, transportation, control, resulting costs.**



# **Who Should, Shouldn't**

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- **Driven by “to whom” - the audience**
  - **Among team members**
  - **Between internal DLA/your family offices**
  - **Outside DLA/your agency**
  - **Internal employees - Impacted employees**
- **Expertise, credibility**



# *What, What Not*

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**Telling a 3-star General your effort may mean \$10 million throughout the Air Force...**

**You may get high level support. By the time the \$10 million translates to a supply sergeant, it's an unnoticeable \$1.85, and why should that sergeant be happy about changing how you do business at that level?**



# **What, What Not**

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- **Speak to what they need, want to hear**
- **Don't take it for granted, that you convey what you intend. Re-read. Put yourself in the customer's place.**
- **It's okay to custom(er)ize for different types of audiences.**

**Major Commands - conceptual level**

**Employees - WIFM concerns**

**Recipients of your services - time, \$, timing  
[schedule of change implementation]**

- **Try on their perspective, test drive your effort.**



# *When, When Not*

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- **Bound by process integrity**
- **You know something**
- **It's necessary**
- **You have an audience**
- **Be timely (great info, too late)**
- **Repeatedly**



# *Where, Where Not*

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- **Multiple audiences,  
multiple venues**
- **Where it works, not where it  
won't**
  - **accessible**





# Why, Why Not

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- **Purpose**
- **Audience needs**
- **Correct information**



# *How, How Not*

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- **Visit**
- **Video**
- **Email**
- **Newsletters**
- **Web**
- **Teleconference, VTC**
- **What works?**
- **Ponder the limitations**



# ***Always Something***

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- **W, W, W, W, W, H conquered!**
- **Any room for errors?**
  - **Ambiguities**
  - **Acronyms**
  - **Typos**
  - **Definitions**



# *Always Room For Better*

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- Not very often are we on the receiving end of “You’re giving me too much meaningful information, too clearly.”
- Not very often do you hear, “You’ve over-communicated with us.”
- Anticipate miscommunication.
- “Most people seriously overestimate their ability to communicate effectively.”



# ***Error Control***

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- **To paraphrase: Communication errors are like cockroaches - we can and should control them, but we'll never eliminate them.**
- **They can get away from you.**
- **They take focus.**
- **They are an unpleasant surprise.**



# ***First Things, First***

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- “CONUS” = continental United States, as in North American continent, as in including Hawaii and Alaska. CONUS = contiguous United States, as in “lower forty-eight,” as in not Alaska and Hawaii, or Puerto Rico. Quick wake up call.
- RIP = Receipt-in-place property
- DRMS’s “RIPLs” as in Receipt-in-place locations R-I-P-L. But... no receipt in place occurs at RIPLs. THAT helps the unfamiliar get a grasp!



# *Wrap*

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**“ Nobody wants to be thought of as careless, or worse, ignorant, or deceitful. Even tiny errors hurt the message. They distract the reader/audience, make it hard to believe. Readers don't need superfluous reasons to stop reading or listening. The news is bad enough.”**



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***Extra Slides as Time  
Allows***





# *Thoughts*

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Speakers believed that their intended meaning was being understood most of the time, but the findings showed that nearly half the time they thought they were understood they actually were not. [May 2002 University of Chicago publication.]



# *Tips*

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- **Be sympathetic**
- **Be empathetic**
- **Almost anything but pathetic**



# ***Reference Info***

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- **Many sources for Communication Tips**
- **DLA's web postings "Today and Tomorrow" page, "News and Views"**
- **Others who've conducted studies and had communications plans**
- **Web search will overwhelm**



# *To Ponder*

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## **What are we trying to accomplish when we communicate?**

- There are studies that suggest we often only know about half the answer.
- We're focusing on optimizing the transmittal of some concept: correct audience, correct time, correct outcome, correct means, correct place, etc.
- Flaws can materialize when we stop too soon learning about that audience, time, outcome, means, place, etc.



# ***Higher Elevation Concepts***

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- **We do a lot of good**
- **We do a lot, well**
- **We do commit some errors**
- **A-76, highly charged**
- **Them, not us, mindset?**



# *Examples*

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## **Just a little ambiguity**

- **The PA shall unload the generator in the yard with a ramp.**
  - **Use a ramp? The yard where there's a ramp? Electrical "generator"?**
- **The PA shall be directed what to do by the gate.**
  - **The gate's in charge?**



# ***Whataya Mean?***

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**“The PA shall start all MHE with a key.”**

- Only forklifts with keys in the ignition?**
- Or keys are to be used instead of knives?**
- Must they start all of them at once or just those they think they'd like to use?**



# *What?*

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“The PA is responsible for all non-working employees.”

- Who hires these kinds of people?
- Or are we guarding against those who finished their shifts, from milling about?

For you who just can relate...

“SISTERS REUNITED AFTER 18 YEARS  
AT DOCTOR’S OFFICE”





# ***Could be Trouble***

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**One letter or space out of place -**

- **Compliant or Complaint**
- **The PA must beat the vendor at the appointed time.**
- **The PA must be at the vendor at the appointed time.**
- **The PA must beat the warehouse cargo door for proper out loading.**



# *More to Say*

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- The PA shall make appointments each Monday to receive property.
- The PA shall unload generators with a forklift, first.
- Used car for sale by older lady with little wear and slight dent in rear.
- Police Discover Crack in Australia
- Those people are racing horses.  
[they don't LOOK like horses]



# ***Real Possibilities***

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- The PA is responsible for Packing, Crating, and Handling, or
- The PA shall execute Packing, Crating, and Handling, or
- The PA shall perform or have performed Packing, Crating, and Handling.

Whenever you travel with your children, be sure to belt them.



## POLICE HELP DOG BITE VICTIM





# ***Reminder Wrap-up***

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- **Put yourself in your audience's place**
- **Custom(er)ize your message**
- **Repeat it**
- **Watch the typos, ambiguities, pronouns, methods when conveying your message**
- **Anticipate miscommunication**
- **Cockroach control**

**“She criticized his apartment, so he knocked her flat.”**